

Remarks/Arguments:

With this amendment, the applicants cancel claims 13, 19-22, 25, and 26. Claim 19 was previously withdrawn and is now cancelled. The applicants add new claims 31-34. Claims 1-18, 23, 24, 27-34 are therefore pending.

I. Claim Amendments

Claims 1-12 and 14-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicants regard as their invention. Specifically, the Office Action rejects the language of "for stimulating return flow of venous blood" is unclear in claims 1 and 14.

Claims 1 and 14 are amended to clarify the claim language. Specifically, claims 1 and 14 are amended to clearly identify that as a result of the intermittent compression of an extremity, "the return flow of venous blood" is stimulated. That is, circulation of blood (at least) back to the heart is increased. Support for this language is found at page 13, 3rd full paragraph.

Please note, the subject matter of claim 23 was amended in view of the term "VELCRO." VELCRO is a registered trademark. In accordance with M.P.E.P. § 608.01(v) and to avoid an indefinite, uncertain, or arbitrary meaning, the applicants replaced "VELCRO" with descriptive terms, namely, "a hook and loop" fastener. New claims 31-34 also contain the language "hook and loop" fastener for this reason.

Claims 28 and 29 are amended to include the limitation "or below." Support is found at page 5, last paragraph, page 11 in the table, and the paragraphs immediately above and below the table on page 11.

No new matter has been added with the amendments.

II. Incorporation of Allowable Subject Matter

A. Device Claims

Claims 20 and 23-26 are claims indicated by the Office Action as containing allowable subject matter, but are objected to because they depend from an unallowable base claim. Therefore, the applicants amend independent device claim 1 to include the limitations of allowable claim 20. Claim 20 is cancelled and claims 23 and 24 are amended to correct their dependencies.

Claims 31 and 32 are new device claims. Claim 31 is independent claim 1 plus the allowable subject matter of claim 25 and claim 21, from which claim 25 depends. Claim 32 is independent claim 1 rewritten to include the limitations of dependent claims 22 and 26.

B. Method Claims

In the same manner, the applicants amend independent method claim 14 to also include the allowable subject matter of cancelled claim 20.

Claims 33 and 34 are new. Claim 33 is the corresponding method claim to claim 31 including the limitations of allowed claims 21 and 25. Claim 34 is the corresponding method claim of claim 32 and includes the limitations of allowed claims 22 and 26. No new matter has been added with the new claims.

Rejections to the Drawings

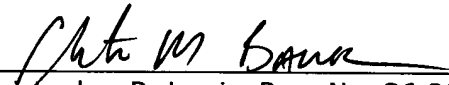
Figures 1 and 4 are rejected in the Office Action under 37 C.F.R. § 1.38(a), specifically, the Office Action states that the word "Controller" should be written inside box 5 of Figure 1.

The applicants appreciate speaking with Examiner Oropeza to clarify the drawing objections. The applicants therefore enclose proposed new Figures 1 and 4 incorporating the suggested changes by the Examiner, specifically, identifying the boxes with their corresponding structure. The applicants submit that the new Figures 1 and 4 overcome the rejection of record.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments to the claims, particularly, the incorporation of allowable subject matter into independent claims 1, 14, and 31-34, the applicants respectfully submit that the claims are now in a condition for allowance and request early notification to that effect. Because a dependent claim contains each and every limitation of the claim from which it depends, they are also in a condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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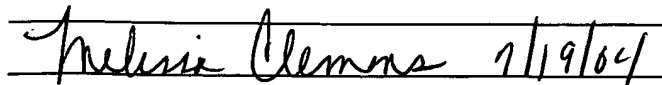
Attachments: Figures 1 and 4 (2 sheets)

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Melissa Clemons 7/19/04